

power to publicize the actions of Republicans and Democrats as part of the larger campaign. One vocal reporter, in some respects a tool of Daniels, was H. E. C. "Red Buck" Bryant of the *Charlotte Observer*. Bryant traveled the state to document the activities of the Democrats and to point out what he perceived as pitfalls of Fusion government. His work included much investigative work in Wilmington. In an effort to inflame white sentiment against "negro domination," he published an article about Wilmington that named black Fusionist office holders in the city.²³

Though the print campaign was successful, Furnifold Simmons was not satisfied with just circulating papers only to paying customers. As a method to entice newspapermen and spread the campaign further, Simmons solicited funds from within the Democratic Party to pay for subscriptions for those who otherwise would not have had access to papers such as the *Raleigh News and Observer* or *Wilmington Messenger*. After the campaign, Simmons explained that he sought to reach the large number of voters who were "not immovably wedded to any party, but who love their State and will vote right if they are made to see what is to the best interest of the people and themselves." Simmons observed that many voters rarely read papers or attended speeches and that "if these good people could be reached and given the facts and thus brought to understand the horrible

conditions of misrule, corruption and extravagance under the Fusionists they would certainly cast their votes to discontinue in power this unholy combination."²⁴ Supported financially by men such as Durham industrialist Julian S. Carr, Simmons and his committee paid for 25,000 weekly papers to be sent directly to selected voters until the elections. The project was seen as a success, and more names were added to the subscription list. By the time of the election, the number of papers circulated using Democratic Party funds reached 40,000. Moreover, newspaper printers were paid to develop 50,000 four-page supplements to regular editions that were sent out with weeklies for the last two months of the campaign.²⁵



"A Serious Question -- How Long Will This Last?"
News and Observer, August 13, 1898.

Image: North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

²³ There are also indications that the *News and Observer* worked closely with editors and writers from the *Atlanta Constitution* and the *Washington Post*. Bryant later recalled that Wilmington's chief of police John Melton had "damned him" and that some in the city blamed his activities for instigating the race riot. "Simmons Hands: Lady-Like Touch Strong as Steel," n.d., H. E.C. Bryant Papers, State Archives, North Carolina Office of Archives and History, Raleigh; *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Henry Edward Cowan Bryant," "Red Shirts Organized," London Papers, State Archives, Office of Archives and History, Raleigh.



"A Warning. Get Back! We Will not Stand It." *News and Observer*, August 30, 1898. Image: North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill